

REMARKS

By this Response, Applicants propose to cancel claims 21-23, 26-36, 38-40, and 51. No claims have been amended or added. Upon entry by the Examiner, claims 41-50, 52 and 53 are pending.

Allowable Subject Matter

At the outset, Applicants are pleased to note the Examiner's indication of allowable claims 41-50, 52 and 53. Applicants propose to cancel claims 21-23, 26-36, 38-40 and 51 in favor of the allowable claims.

Claim Objection

In the Final Office Action, the Examiner objected to claim 51 under 35 U.S.C. §1.75(c), as being of improper form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim.

In response, claim 51 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter therein.

Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding objection under 35 U.S.C. § 1.75(c).

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

In the Final Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 21-23, 28-30, 34-36, and 40 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by *Crean* (U.S. Patent No. 6,565,144). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Responsive to the outstanding rejection, claims 21-23, 28-30, and 34-36 and 40 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 21-23, 28-30, 34-36, and 40 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e).

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In the Final Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 31, 32, and 39 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Crean* (U.S. Patent No. 6,565,144) in view of *Jerila* (U.S. Patent No. 4,631,894). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Responsive to the outstanding rejection, claims 31, 32 and 39 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 31, 32 and 39 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Conclusion

Applicants respectfully request that this Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 be entered by the Examiner, placing all remaining claims into condition for allowance. Applicants submit that the proposed cancellation of claims does not raise new issues or necessitate the undertaking of any additional search of the art by the Examiner, since all of the elements and their relationships claimed were either earlier claimed or inherent in the claims as examined. Therefore, this Amendment should allow for immediate action by the Examiner.

Furthermore, Applicants respectfully point out that the final action by the Examiner presented some new arguments as to the application of the art against Applicant's invention. It is respectfully submitted that the entering of the Amendment would allow the Applicants to reply to the final rejections and place the application into condition for allowance.

Finally, Applicants submit that entry of the amendment would place the application into better form for Appeal, should the Examiner dispute the patentability of the pending claims.

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants submit that this claimed invention, as amended, is neither anticipated nor rendered obvious in view of the prior art references applied against this application. Applicants therefore request the entry of this Amendment, the Examiner's reconsideration and reexamination of the application, and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

If the Examiner believes that additional discussions or information might advance the prosecution of the instant application, the Examiner is invited to contact the

undersigned at the telephone number listed below to expedite resolution of any outstanding issues.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 50-2961.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: November 14, 2007

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